

Chairs of the Appropriations Committee Senators Osten and Formica and Representative Walker and Committee Members

I just wanted to share a story and my thoughts on the Plainville Family Resource Network (PFRN) and what it has meant to my family over the past five years. My children, Ethan, 6 years old, and Collin, 4 years old, have been attending since they were 9 months old and 8 weeks old respectively. We have all gained so much from PFRN, more than I could have ever anticipated.

As predominantly a stay at home mom, with a majority of my friends at different stages in their lives, I found my social circle for parenting concerns and exchanging stories very limited. When I joined PFRN not only did my children make close friends, but I forged some very needed relationships. Although our children are growing up and have now moved on to preschool, kindergarten and first grade they have gained lifelong skills at PFRN and the relationships we made are still intact.

Both boys participated in PFRN's program Soaring Eagles, which helps prepare 3 year olds for attending preschool. At one of these classes they had a Pediatric Optometrist speaker who provided us with valuable information that I would not have known. I bring my children to their pediatrician for their regular well child checks and their pediatrician never mentioned that an independent screening should be done with a pediatric optometrist. I am sure their pediatrician never mentioned this because during a routine well child check my children's eyes appeared fine. But when the Pediatric Optometrist came to PFRN she informed us parents that all children she be seen by a specialist to get a more comprehensive assessment of our children's vision as things can be easily missed in a regular pediatrician visit. So learning this I scheduled both my sons for a screening with a Pediatric Optometrist, I anticipated everything would be fine. Ethan was noted to have a slight eye movement delay which if undetected and untreated could lead to dyslexia. When the Specialist looked at Collin's eyes with her special equipment and she saw he had an astigmatism and that there was no way he was seeing as clearly as he should be. He got glasses that day and has been wearing them ever since. Shortly after he got his glasses I asked him how he was seeing and he said "I see much better now". I was deeply saddened that he had not been able to see clearly prior but he was so young he did not realize there was a problem and therefore could not vocalize it to me. Without PFRN and the incredible programs they offer to families, Collin's vision problem would most likely be still undetected.

I could go on and on about PFRN and their value to the families of Plainville. They have played such a major role in the lives of my children and a constant support to our family.

I would be happy to speak more on the subject or answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your time.

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